



Lyn Hejinian
and the Rejection of Closure
Third Saturday Poesy Café
September 19, 2015
Presenter: Tom Corrado

Poetry takes as its premise that language . . . is a medium for experiencing experience.

We delight in our sensuous involvement with the materials of language, we long to join words to the world - to close the gap between ourselves and things - and we suffer from doubt and anxiety because of our inability to do so.

The "open text" often emphasizes or foregrounds process, either the process of the original composition or of subsequent compositions by readers. . . .

Language is nothing but meanings, and meanings are nothing but a flow of contexts. Such contexts rarely coalesce into images, rarely come to terms. They are transitions, transmutations, the endless radiating of denotation into relation.

What is, or isn't, a poem? What makes something poetic? These questions remain open. And the fact that there are no final answers is one source of the vitality of the art form.

Poetic language is also a language of improvisation and intention. The intention provides the field for inquiry and improvisation is the means of inquiring. Or, to phrase it another way, the act of writing is a process of improvisation within a framework (form) of intention.

Why Lyn Hejinian?

I stumbled upon Lyn Hejinian's words in an essay on my favorite poet John Ashbery. I began googling her, and liked what I found. Her approach to working with words seemed consistent with Ashbery's, and with mine: her poems consisted of discrete elements with few if any transitionals. Like Ashbery's they mimicked the process of thinking, attempting to portray the experience of experience by capturing haphazard memories, odd associations, random images, scraps of conversation, the inner mumbo-jumbo of the mind, life's buzzing distractions. Non-linear and often seeded with non-sequiturs, Hejinian's open-ended poems or fragmented poems or just plain weird poems seemed to better invite the collaboration of the reader's or listener's imagination into the experience of the poem.

Bio

Born in Oakland, California in 1941, Lyn Hejinian is a poet, essayist, translator, publisher, and teacher. She has published more than a dozen books of poetry, several collections of essays, two novels, and three volumes of translations of the Russian poet Arkadii Dragomoshchenko. In 2016, Omnidawn Publishing will release her latest collection of poems, *The Unfollowing*. Like Anne Carson, Hejinian has worked on a number of collaborative projects with painters, musicians, and filmmakers. Among her many honors are a Writing Fellowship from the California Arts Council and a Translation Fellowship from the National Endowment of the Arts, grants and awards from the Academy of American Poets, the Poetry Fund, and the Guggenheim Foundation. She currently lives in Berkeley with her husband, composer/musician Larry Ochs, and teaches poetics at the University of California.

Hejinian's Poetry

Hejinian's work often demonstrates how poetry is a way of thinking, a way of encountering and constructing the world, one endless utopian moment even as it is full of failures.

- Juliana Spahr, *American Women Poets in the 21st Century: Where Lyric Meets Language* [co-edited with Claudia Rankine], Wesleyan, 2002.

Inventive and discursive, quirky and non-linear, [Hejinian] is warmer and more humane than Ashbery, and, for me, more satisfying to read, because she is less intentionally vacant. . . . Alternately dipping into the textual and the experiential, sometimes straightforward and sometimes wildly errant, her work

doesn't want for speculative intelligence of many kinds – but in Hejinian's writing, one feels the attachment of the speaker. Though she is dead-set against predictability, her method doesn't feel like a lunge for novelty, or an obedience to an ethic of deconstruction, but like a comfortable, well-worn style of dress. As a consequence, in a Hejinian poem, ideas are shaded and fleshed by experience, and vice versa. Her work is simply more three-dimensional than most poems, conventional or experimental . . .

- Tony Hoagland, *Recognition, Vertigo, and Passionate Worldliness. Poetry, September 2010.*

Hejinian, an influential figure in the world of experimental and avant-garde poetics, is perhaps best known as one of the founding members of the Language writing movement, a loosely affiliated group of writers and poets active in the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1970s. Language poetry emphasizes the reader's role in giving meaning to a work. It downplays expression, seeing the poem as a construction in and of language itself. It developed in part in response to what poets considered the uncritical use of expressive lyric sentiment among earlier poetry movements. In the 1950s and 1960s, certain groups of poets had followed William Carlos Williams in his use of idiomatic American English rather than what they considered the *heightened* or overtly poetic language favored by the New Criticism movement. New York School poets like Frank O'Hara and Kenneth Koch and the Black Mountain group emphasized both speech and everyday language in their poetry and poetics. In contrast, some of the Language poets emphasized metonymy, synecdoche, and extreme instances of paratactical structures in their compositions, which, even when employing everyday speech, created a far different texture. The result is often alien and difficult to understand at first glance, prodding the reader to participate in creating the meaning of the poem. Through a variety of techniques such as what came to be called the *new sentence*, Language writers sought to engage the reader in new ways, making them active participants in the process of reading and meaning-making. *New sentences* are discrete elements with no clear transitions, resembling in some ways a list poem. The gap created by a text that moves from subject to subject invites the reader to participate, to bring his or her own reading to the text, to inject meaning into the experience. By breaking up poetic language, the poet forces the reader to find a new way to approach the text.

Hejinian fractures the rules of predictability in syntax and sentence. Yet despite her Harvard deconstructionism pedigree, she is not remote: she handles her material in a quasi-discursive, quasi-autobiographical manner, comforting in its intimacy and physicality. She is worldly. She is having fun, practicing a method

she calls *free concentration* which tracks the changing presence of consciousness, like runners passing in a road race. And though she is declarative and non-sequitur, she doesn't allow the reader to become complacent, yet, she is careful not to batter or bait or alienate the reader. She has honed her skills. She is very good at what she does. Her improvisations are seamless. Her timing masterful. We are easily carried along by her word-work. She makes it palatable, enjoyable.

Eleven Eyes Verse II

The spoons have clattered.
Aren't children little pears and observant birds?
I note that the green blanket is askew again briefly.
I have flung my sweater over the banister again.
The corn cockle is beautiful.
For months I've owed someone I'll call Amy Rossini a letter
and tomorrow I'll write it but I can't explain.
There was of course the matter of the curious descent into a mine
and the terrible ascent of children
hauling ore out of context.
Brevity is not child's play
though child's play is brief but slowly.
Today a man in a green leather hat
advised me to sink my shovel
If I were to write a letter to Knut Handekker now
he wouldn't remember who I was
which in any case is not who I continue to be.
Tchaikovsky died when he was 53.
We'll celebrate my birthday wearing hats
in May at the beach.
Taking the espresso I said gracias,
but much else in daily life is unauthorized.
The house in which I toss is known by its address
but it might have been named Credulity and called a film.
Believe me long ago I was once in Seville in a blue dress
that could be washed and dried in less than an hour.
I want to speak of revolutions in beauty
but I hear hordes counting down to midnight.
The tales I used to tell myself no longer do.
None of this is true.

Open vs. Closed Texts

In *The Language of Inquiry*, Hejinian posits two kinds of texts: open and closed. Closed texts are those which allow for a single interpretation – in her introduction she cites some contemporary lyric poetry and detective stories as examples. In open texts, by contrast, *all the elements of the work are maximally excited* and multiple readings or interpretations become available. The *open text*, by definition, is open to the reader. It invites participation, rejects the authority of the writer over the reader and thus, by analogy, the authority implicit in other (social, economic, cultural) hierarchies. To provoke the reader's participation, the open text engages in a series of disruptive techniques that expose the reader to the possibilities of meaning that he or she brings to the text. It speaks for writing that is generative rather than directive.

In *The Rejection of Closure*, Hejinian cites the reasons for making an *open text*: *The writer relinquishes total control and challenges authority as a principle and control as a motive. The open text often emphasizes or foregrounds process, either the process of the original composition or of subsequent compositions by readers, and thus resists the cultural tendencies that seek to identify and fix material and turn it into a product; that is, it resists reduction and commodification.*

Hejinian then goes on to list a few techniques that *open* a text: arrangement and rearrangement, repetition, and compositional strategies resulting in *gaps* in the text which must be filled by the reader. In emphasizing the reader's role, writing as process, and the political implications of both, Hejinian articulates many of the main goals and concerns of the Language movement:

For the sake of clarity, I will offer a tentative characterization of the terms open and closed. We can say that a "closed text" is one in which all the elements of the work are directed toward a single reading of it. Each element confirms that reading and delivers the text from any lurking ambiguity. In the "open text," meanwhile, all the elements of the work are maximally excited; here it is because ideas and things exceed (without deserting) argument that they have taken into the dimension of the work.

My Life and My Life in the Nineties

Hejinian's experimental autobiography *My Life*, first published in 1980, is the purest example of her poetics. The complex transparency of its thought and the beauty of its language established her as one of the foremost members of the

Language school of poetry. An urtext of Language poetry, it has become a cult classic, finding its way into countless contemporary poetry and women's studies syllabi in high schools, colleges, and universities, as well as onto the bookshelves of poets and general readers.

My Life is composed of titled prose paragraphs, each built of disjunctive sentences that avoid coherence. The text is allusive and often ambiguous. Many of the sentences appear as windows into a life, while others act as brief aphorisms on the making of the book itself. Phrases recur and weave together as motifs throughout, making new meanings through repetition. Hejinian keeps overall coherence at arm's length by acknowledging that when writing any history it is *impossible to get close to the original, or to know what really happened.*

My Life begins:

A moment yellow, just as four years later, when my father returned home from the war, the moment of greeting him, as he stood at the bottom of the stairs, younger, thinner than when he had left, was purple - though moments are no longer so colored. Somewhere, in the background, rooms share a pattern of small roses. Pretty is as pretty does. In certain families, the meaning of necessity is at one with the sentiment of pre-necessity. The better things were gathered in a pen. The windows were narrowed by white gauze curtains which were never loosened. Here I refer to irrelevance, that rigidity which never intrudes. Hence, repetitions, free from all ambition.

Another significant feature of the work is how it has changed over time. When originally published in 1980, *My Life* consisted of 37 prose sections, each consisting of 37 sentences - Hejinian was 37 at the time of its writing. Seven years later, a revised edition appeared, expanding the text to 45 sections of 45 sentences, again reflecting Hejinian's age. Hejinian has continued to update the book over time, allowing it to grow with her, and has released a further volume titled *My Life in the Nineties*.

My Life represents a breakthrough in several respects. It questions the nature of autobiography and challenges the idea of memoir, reevaluating what it means to call a piece of writing a *Life*. It defines identity by fragmentation, which characterizes the postmodern bent of Hejinian's fellow Language poets. It is also a hallmark of feminist experimental writing, establishing a new and distinct voice. But the book's greatest strength may be its openness to interpretation. The

poet and critic Juliana Spahr has suggested that *the structural point of this work is not to assert personal power or identity, but to activate readers' minds*. Crucial to understanding Hejinian's work is the realization that it cultivates, even requires, an act of resistant reading. *Her work is deliberately unsettling in its unpredictability, its diversions from conventions, the way it is out of control* (Spahr, 2002), giving the false impression that she has lost her way, her train of thought.

Spahr regards *My Life* as *currently the most important of Hejinian's work*, noting that it has attracted much scholarly attention. Poet and critic Lisa Samuels, likewise, has advocated its inclusion in the academic canon: *This work, through its attention to alternative and multiple ways of telling, refuses to invoke the transparent language conventions that typically compose autobiography*.

Since the 1970s, when Hejinian began writing, many of the techniques and interests of Language writing have become commonplace in Contemporary American Poetry; moreover, Hejinian and her fellow Language writers like Ron Silliman, Charles Bernstein, and Rae Armantrout have found employment in academia as professors and visiting writers, complicating the *oppositional* stance of much of their early work. Discussing the newly-anthologized status of Language writing with Craig Dworkin in an interview originally published in *Idiom #3*, Hejinian noted *Both the big Messerli anthology and the Norton have the overt ambition to define and historicize a lot of activity, and they're going to do that. They are going to be, for a long time now, the avenue through which people come to understand and be exposed to this work. That may be good for your generation: there it is, that's history, now we can get on with what we're doing. But for me, the big challenge is to remember that this story is not adequate, that it's not the whole story, that these books don't feel like what it really was - they don't really show it*.

Coda

Hejinian's open-text poems are exciting and enjoyable non-linear excursions into a provocative textual landscape, providing a window into the experience of experience, a look into a mind-at-work. Readers who suspend the reflex to make meaning or sense of textual encounters will be rewarded with the rich imagery, the (sometimes) dissonant musicality, and the wonderful word-work of Hejinian's experimental creations.

Poems

from *My Life*

Back and backward, why, wide and wider. Such that art is inseparable from the search for reality. The continent is greater than the content. A river nets the peninsula. The garden rooster goes through the goldenrod. I watched a robin worming its way on the ridge, time on the uneven light ledge. There as in that's their truck there. Where it rested in the weather there it rusted. As one would say, my friends, meaning no possession, and don't harm my trees. Marigolds, nasturtiums, snapdragons, sweet William, forget-me-nots, replaced by chard, tomatoes, lettuce, garlic, peas, beans, carrots, radishes - but marigolds. The hum hurts. Still, I felt intuitively that this which was incomprehensible was expectant, increasing, was good. The greatest thrill was to be the one to "tell" All rivers' left banks remind me of Paris, not to see or sit upon but to hear spoken of. Cheese makes one thirsty but onions make a worse thirst. The Spanish make a little question frame. In the case, propped on a stand so as to beckon, was the hairy finger of St. Cecilia, covered with rings. The old dress is worn out, torn up, dumped. Erasures could not serve better authenticity. The years pass, years in which, I take it, events were not lacking. There are more colors in the great rose window of Chartres than in the rose. Beside a body, not a piece, of water. Serpentine is fool's jade. It is on a dressed stone. The previousness of plants in prior color - no dream can come up to the original, which in the common daylight is voluminous. Yet he insisted that his life had been full of happy chance, that he was luck's child. As a matter-of fact, quite the obverse. After a 9-to-5 job he got to just go home. Do you have a compulsion to work and then did you have a good time. Now it is one o'clock on the dot, but that is only a coincidence and it has a bad name. Patriots drive larger cars. At the time the perpetual Latin of love kept things hidden. We might be late to the movies but always early for the kids. The women at the parents' meeting must wear rings, for continuity. More sheep than sleep. Paul was telling me a plot which involved time travel, I asked, "How do they go into the future?" and he answered, "What do you mean? - they wait and the future comes to them - of course!" so the problem was going into the past. I think my interests are much broader than those of people who have been saying the same thing for eight years, or so he said. Has the baby enough teeth for an apple. Juggle, jungle, chuckle. The hummingbird, for all we know, may be singing all day long. We had been in France where every word really was a bird, a thing singing. I laugh as if my pots were clean. The apple in the pie is the pie. An extremely pleasant and often comic satisfaction comes from conjunction, the fit,

say, of comprehension in a reader's mind to content in a writer's work. But not bitter.

The Unfollowing

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Afloat in a glass-bottom boat, I see into the sea - a miniscule emerald memento
That the strongest social bonds are forged by language doesn't nullify
the power that dancing around the puppet effigies of the men
in power has

On the solemn face of the glinting belly is a button baby
You have to know how to roll on the horizon
Followers follow, possibles possibulate, coruscations consider, blood
coagulates

An allegory is a depiction of something that can't be depicted
Mathias Madrid thrusts his fist toward his face in a mirror, Millicent
Malcolm pets a faithful falcon on a perch, Margaret Mason
makes fig jam to serve on cold toast with hard cheese
The pyrotechnical expanse, lacking azure, makes do with blatant
blackness, unspoken light
Winter's cover's curled back by adjectives - whacking winter's roadside
cover

Stained owls and up over the ill rabbits they fly
Several hours go by but hours are impossible to perceive
I market, am marketed, mark, remark
We walk down a street under windows that let in noise that might
prompt someone asleep in the room to dream of drummers,
flautists, a man on stilts with a tuba, a sextet of giggling girls
What is it ghosts wonder?

56

It should not be strange to be a woman rewarded
Letters click as they wander, shift as they ascend, their altitudes attain
autobiography
Next you are like dry steps' passing sound and fall, and then you are
like sweetened grapefruit

Everything applies in the hyper-patterning that retrospect
attempts and to which the irreverent response is "How
splay!"

In the small houses of the children in the house there are always
complex simplicities and one was a vast pink stuffed
equine thing called Star

Wet Brahms

Revocation of harm

By moving from window to window and carefully recording at
each what we see, we . . .

It is time you were told of the time I failed to defend the bull and
indeed rejoiced in its murder

This is not hypocritical!

The statue at its fullest is emptiest of meaning

She speaks to another not about sex but about a particular game
of truth

Sonorousness facilitates the descent of sunny notes from the
ponderosa

Dancers have fleas - or, shall we say that fleas live on the planet
of dancers?

62

Into the disordered shortening of a circle comes this little fury,
this abdicated panic, this dirty Venus, this resemblance
to nothing we know of the dead

Sky simultaneous bud, cavity contemporaneous slight

And from the tree a ripe peach falls and a puff of dust rises,
gently circles, drifts, spreads, holds its shape, dissipates,
and settles under the tree again and on the weeds nearby

Once there was a woman I'll name another day and in her care
were eight well-matched strong pelicans who flew low
over the sea in careful configurations that brought her
aesthetic pleasure and more fish than she or they could
eat

Life is rife with erasure and time is rich with delay

Immediately the eater spots some defects (bits of meat, scraps of green)

No, I did not forget the sad vagrant shuffling about in his red

speckled secrecy and I will never do so again!
You've been boasting of your cantaloupe pottage, you've provided
us with thin toast, your glory increases all about you
Hush - ssshh - what is it?
The ancestor wandered toward the horizon, he craved
recognition, but eons went by and he landed in a circus,
there being no other work for a man from the gloom of
origins
Cousins are composite, constructed, compared
Quick, lively, assembled ripples monitor, mosquitoes spill, and
the children dine on candy
The sky is another point, this time of ambiguous blue
Why didn't I think of that?

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in memoriam Arkadii Trofimovich Dragomoshchenko Feb 3 1946-Sept 12, 2012

A grasshopper singing of death laughs long - as if a heavy -
hearted granny spoke a light word
A shadow scuds over glass, the glass stands still
Insects seethe and they say that is the dream of language but
what is language if not what is threading through the
veins of an insect's wings
What does it mean to say "now" now, as now surfaces in a gesture,
as of a person pushing his eyeglasses up toward his brow
Our luggage is stacked sky-high, we are wearing twenty layers of
clothes, every utterance is symphonic
I've never made curtains for these windows, stabbed by the mid-
morning light
I pass with a broom, standing with a hose in my hand and my
thumb against the nozzle
The loops of time droop, fall slack - and someone steps out of
those that were his or hers, hers or his, his and hers, his
and his, hers and hers - is it right, then, that we are left
to hurtle alone
The girls danced in dead light, the cadavers lay in live light - but
as for those girls, men with mouths like mare vaginas
watched them

Every rough rupture demands elasticity of the imagination
The silver river is irreversible but you attentively watch its mouth
What you write achieves its independence though you are nimble,
 arrogant, sly and wise.
That is how you spend the day, which is itself a powerful force
 and raises the significant question "How did you get
 here?"
All suffering is in the egg - now suck it out of its shell and spit
 it away

Ponderable

The pine branches reach - the rain! the sun! the edge of the moving air!
 three goats!
Girls on razor scooters turn the corner and scoot
Autonomy actually shows, it shines amidst the stars of decision
I sacrifice hearing to writing, I return to the back of the train
Surrounded by nothing but tattered island nasturtia, the shoveler is
 prepared to exclaim, "Grief exterior, grief prison"
Beastly pine cones are falling from the sky
Down in the middle, and a soft wall, the midnight breeze billows
Check the role, the rock, the rule!
From cardboard pressed to ginger, water spilled on a list, salt sprinkled
 over . . .
Why so many references to dogs, purple, and bananas?
Then the carnival - it came up afterwards like a vermilion buttress to
 say of itself "it appears"
Wren in a ragged bee line, flora sleeping live
Yuki, Felicia, and Maxwell have between them \$13.75, and they are
 hungry as they enter the small café, where they see a display of
 pies and decide to spend all their money on pie there and
then -
 how much pie will each get to eat if each pie costs \$5.25?
Invincible is my myopia, great is my waist, choral are my ideas, wingéd
 are my eyebrows, deep is my obscurity - who am I?

Hejinian's comments:

Ponderable is an elegy from my collection titled The Unfollowing, forthcoming from Omnidawn in 2016. Noticing that it is a poem of fourteen lines, readers might

speculate that it is a sonnet, but a proper sonnet is structured to facilitate logical thinking and that is precisely what is precluded when one is confronted by death: there is no coming to terms with it.

Riddled

Thing now tone, aquatic tilt is real, stick and money thief, turn the future,
scratch gas, cricket

Listen

Little spider darting out from a hiding place behind a rolodex and racing to a
cranny between piles of papers: something we saw, wanting it to come back, or
wanting it to go, like a king when royalty is outmoded

Glenn Gould is still humming along like a Volkswagen on an autobahn

One day a mournful young man spat on a traffic cop's shoe, but the man's name was
Ferdinando and the cop's name was Matilda, and they lived together happily ever
after

Actually, I am not addressing myself here to metaphysicians, nor to spirits, nor to
pedants, because none of these know how to see the particular beauty of a rain-
soaked field

I believe I have acceded with docility to aesthetic laws - so says Odilon Redon,
but to what in the world around us might those laws pertain?

All good children envy mint, so tune your instruments accordingly, because mint is
as obstinate as a god

A celebration takes place and in surprise my error is corrected

Parsimonious ethnicity, cowardly mind, constraining gender, uninherited class,
deracinated citizenship

You are so tired and I am so timing and he is so tidy and then there are those
others, all so tithed and tipped-off and titanic

Help, I'm clinging to the side of a cliff, gripping a crumpling outcropping of rock,
a train is rumbling through the valley below, a passenger looks up

Then two tiny birds darted (jetted? bulletted? sped!) from one tree to another and I
could see a band or spot of yellow on each, but they were too little and too fast
for me and who cares about identification?

I am very busy, I have a lot of energy, I've got a lot of projects underway, I've a
number of plans, I'm very active, I'm industrious, productive

++++

Cat in the redwood, chasing pie

Now in a sequence is a consequence, right?

Fred laughs, Ferdie scowls, Finnian drums, but whatever it is that Clarissa Shirley Jemma Moore does is whatever only she knows and maybe she doesn't
You have only to slide some sprigs of thyme after the shallot and lemon into the cavity

In the tale the dachshund wears boots and the little girl, its companion, has a purse that replenishes itself with money whenever she buys kibble, cookies, or fruit

War warrant plate daring too doesn't didn't sum it

An autobiography offers a gloss to a life, but it's a translator's gloss, full of misunderstandings

She dared to ask and get canny and deride servility and temper glass and scatter candies, and that was a mighty horsewoman indeed, and she rode with chocolate spurs

I wouldn't say particles exactly, I couldn't capture particles of any single lifetime, because there is no single lifetime nor solid anchor nor sweaty pathos that doesn't end up at the bottom of some sea

Slowly she swiftly turns and all that was said is to be long considered

The present cannot decipher

Make it language then, with no pictures

The ponderous sun hangs as rose and cream white fruits must if student loans doom college graduates to poverty

A love scout, that's the term, is he or she who sometimes finds mourners, sometimes celebrants, sometimes children, sometimes no one at all

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Suppose ungainly twigs, somewhat

Lished itivity tent ample crates

You disappear into a duration, the where and while of which is called

Heedlessness, Indifference, Absence, Mischief

Yesterday, let's go out; tomorrow, we were kept indoors, now let's eat grapes

Suppose the poet speaks and the language doesn't answer

The passion has its turf but, whoops! - I thought it was better managed than that!

Nobody moves in the photograph, nor will they ever move

Rally roll and then the little girl went up the tree

Into an L-shaped alley the young son strolls harboring a month's provisions in his velvet portmanteau

The radiator knocks, the jump rope knots

Digestion proceeds as we sleep, and it is for this reason that we fart upon waking

It had been raining for three days in that interstitial environment, home to local fauns, where men come out of oaks dark, smart, and with a hint of criminality
Speculate for me
One a tree, softly, two a right eye, tenderly, three a threshold, kindly, four a mallard, fortuitously

++++

Isn't worry wooden?
Appearances burn to perfection, the same old frolic, permanent atoms becoming astronauts and then unbecoming them again
There was never and will be never and once she was like a gazelle commanding a field
Violent is the violin, deep is the speed with which the Great Wall of China wanders, serene is the soot far up the chimney venting the smoke from the *Longlife Log*
The sun keeps its secret, the daily news is sunk in light
This is a melody played on a cock harmonica, lyrics lost in a story buried under a bellicose rock
Could she and why?
What butter!
The barefoot musician fiddles on the ice with greater weight over the years and the juggler's jugs get lighter
It's not from an aphorism that you'd want our memories to rise - you'd resist, persist, preside
Life is full of indubitable data, indelicate stuff
Though drawn to the claims of the sky, I duck my vertigo and devour a huge sandwich, my commitment to gravity, which holds my shadow to the ground
We are subject to the ultimate disorientation, a cloud of invisible power
The sun is surefire

++++

She stilled cream-colored stones an eternity ago and one bird flying there too
This is a pictograph of sediment not sentiment, of unbound layers of mud not the sold ore of South African gold
It is said that seven sleepers slumbered for two centuries and then woke up
The dead have mixed

Writers drowse in books, and being one I find that the first two words on page 203 of the book are Wilfred Owen's (bent double) and the first two on page 307 are Auden's (amid rustle) - magic!

What might a demographer dare?

Behold the scooters and riders and divers, scooting and riding and diving up

The young woman on tiptoe said and we didn't doubt

What's desirable then isn't writable - there are more walls than trees there

Clerk, haven't you a pen with pigs in it?

Okay, I'm leaning back, as if that would help me remember from pungency and acerbic comments relegating Natasha Rostov to the makeshift stages of a sitcom, but I fall - off that stage!

Butter jumps

Curmudgeon

The autobiographical isn't renewable - so who is she?

Unfollowed Figment

Useless lighthouse, and the bucket on the beach, the tattered begonias

Forget examples - there's not an entity or detail around that isn't more than a mere example

What's truly funny?

Once upon a time there was a mouse, and there was a cactus and a pair of very small rubber

boots with a hole in the sole of the left one, and now that I think back I remember that there

was a baby on a barge in a lake full of flowers, and out of these there's a story to weave

and probably more than one

The music changes at the mantel, the bassoonist is baffled, the synchronizer fails
Rickety marble, wet wood, the road narrowing into the distance and then turning around a rock

Is it empty good writing, is it research, resurgence, repartee?

8, 9, 10, 11, minus 31, 8

A stranger creates an occasion

Lewd silver sea, your bigness carries barges as noon stands in grass

See, I got cops - or they got me; so says the melancholy memoirist from the anarchy of her

dreams

Clear is the sojourn

In the stiff air, down the unbalanced wind, over dusty culverts, women bear their

